



# MAGIC VALLEY

BLAINE, CAMAS, CASSIA, GOODING, JEROME, LINCOLN, MINIDOKA, & TWIN FALLS COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

As seen in Magic Valley Table 1, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Magic Valley LMA was 4.0 percent in May 2001. This was unchanged from April 2001 and five-tenths of a percentage point less than May 2000.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* has declined slightly since May 2000, as new job creation has slowed in the Magic Valley reflecting statewide and nationwide trends toward a cooling economy. The sector that showed the largest increase from 2000 to 2001 was *Government Education*; however, much of that increase is attributable to adjustments in the numbers to more accurately reflect the employment picture since last year. *Transportation, Communications, and Utilities* also grew slightly, as did *Wholesale Trade*. Employment sectors with declines over the last year include *Retail Trade*; *Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate*; *Services*; and *Government Administration*. The reasons behind these declines are general economic cooling and the effect of recent bank mergers on employment.

As mentioned above, the overall employment picture reflects an easing of economic growth as well as less consumer confidence and cautious staffing by employers. As the national and state economies continue to show mixed signals, it is expected that this static situation in Magic Valley employment will continue throughout 2001.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Twin Falls County

- Curtis H. Eaton has been selected as the new vice-president of institutional planning and development and executive director of the College of Southern Idaho Foundation. Mr. Eaton is the south-central Idaho division president of Wells Fargo Bank and a lifetime resident of Twin Falls. He also served as a member of the Idaho Board of Education from 1993

Magic Valley Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Twin Falls, Jerome, and Gooding counties

	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	48,130	49,310	47,110	-2.4	2.2
Unemployment	1,900	1,970	2,130	-3.6	-10.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.0%	4.0%	4.5%		
Total Employment	46,230	47,340	44,980	-2.3	2.8
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	48,300	48,380	47,290	-0.2	2.1
Unemployment	1,740	1,820	1,940	-4.4	-10.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6%	3.8%	4.1%		
Total Employment	46,560	46,560	45,350	0.0	2.7
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>					
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	6,900	6,870	7,050	0.4	-2.1
Mining & Construction	2,070	1,940	2,100	6.7	-1.4
Manufacturing	4,830	4,930	4,950	-2.0	-2.4
Durable Goods	820	880	850	-6.8	-3.5
Nondurable Goods	4,010	4,050	4,100	-1.0	-2.2
Food Processing	2,970	2,980	3,040	-0.3	-2.3
All Other Nondurable Goods	1,040	1,070	1,060	-2.8	-1.9
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	30,740	30,640	30,630	0.3	0.4
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,830	2,820	2,810	0.4	0.7
Wholesale Trade	2,340	2,330	2,310	0.4	1.3
Retail Trade	8,150	8,080	8,170	0.9	-0.2
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,270	1,310	1,320	-3.1	-3.8
Services	8,230	8,080	8,490	1.9	-3.1
Government Administration	3,710	3,700	3,770	0.3	-1.6
Government Education	4,210	4,320	3,760	-2.5	12.0

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

until his resignation when he accepted the CSI position. His resignation from banking is effective July 15, 2001, and he will begin work for CSI the next day.

- Solo Cup, Inc. has been awarded a contract to provide 80,000 cases of three-piece school cafeteria kits to the Los Angeles School System cafeterias. As a result of the increased business, Solo Cup has increased and stabilized its employment at 15 full-time operators for each of the company's four shifts with two to four temporary operators per shift. The temporary employees will become full-time operators if the business maintains. The three-piece kits consist of a napkin, a "spork" (a spoon-shaped utensil with fork-like tines) and a "spike-straw" with a sharp end for puncturing milk cartons. The contract will last one year with an automatic renewal for another year if the product meets the contractor's quality standards.

- China's Ambassador to the United States, Yang Jiechi, and Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne attended a reception at the College of Southern Idaho's Herrett Center to promote Idaho-China trade relations. The Chinese delegation, consisting of Mr. Yang and 24 Shanghai government, education, and business leaders, arrived in Twin Falls after first visiting Boise and touring a Buhl trout farm. Governor Kempthorne will be leading an Idaho trade mission to China in October and Mr. Yang expressed his hope that through this mutual exchange that Idahoans will learn more about Shanghai.
- The Twin Falls County Commission has imposed its fourth moratorium on dairies since July 2000. The purpose of the 120-day moratorium is to allow the county commission to continue to work with dairy operators and the public to draft a county ordinance covering dairy operations. The moratorium restricts any new dairies with greater than 77 milking cows from setting up locally, or the expansion of existing dairies with greater than 77 milking cows. The county commissioners expect to have an ordinance ready for public hearings in late July or early August.
- Three American Red Cross employees in Twin Falls will be laid off as a result of statewide budget cuts in the American Red Cross of Greater Idaho. The Rupert Office will be closed and two staff members transferred to Twin Falls. In the change, one full-time and two part-time positions will be eliminated and one full-time Twin Falls employee will be reduced to half-time. Statewide, 13.5 staff positions will be cut.

#### **Jerome, Gooding, Lincoln, Camas, & Blaine Counties**

- A T & T announced the location of its new Point of Presence (PoP) site on the butte east of Jerome. The new facility allows A T & T Internet users a closer connection point to the fiber optics line that runs through downtown Jerome as opposed to connecting in Pocatello or Boise. Jerome is one of only two PoP sites recently located in Idaho. The other site serves the Lewiston area and the two facilities together were an investment of \$1.5 million. It is expected that this new site will assist greatly in the recruitment of technology businesses to the Jerome area.
- The Gooding County Commission voted to extend the moratorium on confined animal feeding operations for another 120 days so that the county ordi-

nance can be rewritten to deal with dairy-related issues such as air quality, dust control, and soil nutrient imbalances.

- The U. S. Postal Service will open its new \$3 million Ketchum Post Office on July 23, 2001. Three years in the planning, the new 17,700-square-foot facility will be located on the corner of Second Avenue and Fourth Street in Ketchum. Postal Service employees plan to make the transition to the new office on Saturday and Sunday, July 21 and 22. Outgoing mail services will not be interrupted, and regular delivery service will only be interrupted on the transition days.

#### **Cassia and Minidoka Counties**

- The Mini-Cassia Job Service held the Open House for its new facility on June 20, 2001. Idaho Department of Labor Director Roger Madsen and Department representatives from Boise, along with the management team from the Magic Valley Job Service, joined the Mini-Cassia staff in welcoming many state and local officials to the event. Idaho Industrial Commission Chairman James F. Kile, State Senator Denton Darrington, and other dignitaries participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony sponsored by the Mini-Cassia Chamber of Commerce. Senator Darrington thanked the Idaho Department of Labor for its commitment to the Mini-Cassia area. Mini-Cassia staff conducted tours for the public for the entire day. The new facility has 17 computer terminals in the resource area for customer use and two conference rooms and an employer interview room. The Idaho Industrial Commission also has located its Mini-Cassia Office in the new facility partnering with the Idaho Department of Labor. The new office is over twice the size of the old office that was demolished to make room for the parking area. The Open House was very well attended and staff members participated in radio broadcasts by KAT Country 92.5 FM during the event.

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